

Message Text

PAGE 01 NATO 05815 191230Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

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O 191215Z OCT 74
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8275

SECRET USNATO 5815

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, PFOR, MNMC
SUBJECT: GREEK-PORTUGUESE ATTENDANCE AT NPG MINISTERIAL MEETING

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN FROM MCAULIFFE

REF: STATE 228686 AND PREVIOUS

1. SYG LUNS AND ALLIES ARE WAITING FOR SOME SIGNAL FROM US ON QUESTION OF PORTUGUESE AND GREEK ATTENDANCE AT NPG MINISTERIAL IN ROME ON NOV 7 AND 8. ITALIANS, THROUGH CATALANO, ARE PRESSING HARDEST FOR SOME INDICATOR, SINCE THEY AS HOST GOVERNMENT MUST MAKE ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS; AND, AS YOU WOULD EXPECT, THEY ARE SKITTISH BECAUSE THEY FEAR THAT ELEVENTH HOUR DECISION TO EXCLUDE PORTUGUESE AND/OR GREEKS MIGHT REKINDLE PUBLIC DEBATE WHICH MIGHT IMPINGE IN SOME WAY ON THEIR OWN FRAGILE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION.

2. MY LATEST SOUNDINGS WITH LUNS AND KEY ALLIES (FRG, UK, BELGIANS, DUTCH) WOULD INDICATE THAT ON BALANCE THEY CAN GO ALONG ON THIS OCCASION REPEAT ON THIS OCCASION WITH NPG MINISTERIAL THAT IS WATERED DOWN IN SUBSTANCE FOR SECURITY REASONS. THEY HAVE BEEN HEWING QUITE WELL TO US LINE THAT NATO AND ALLIES SHOULD MAINTAIN NORMAL ROUTINE RELATIONS WITH ATHENS AWAITING OUTCOME GREEK ELECTIONS AND FURTHER MOVEMENT TOWARD RESOLUTION CYPRUS SITUATION; AND THEY TAKE COMFORT FROM FACT THAT GREECE WILL BE REPRESENTED AT NPG BY AMBASSADOR THEODORAPOULOS, WHO HAS ALREADY MADE POSITIVE AND

SECRET

PAGE 02 NATO 05815 191230Z

FAVORABLE IMPRESSION AT EVERE.

3. WITH RESPECT TO PORTUGAL, THEY ARE CONFUSED, APPREHENSIVE AND INADEQUATELY INFORMED. IT IS TRUE THAT THEY WOULD HAVE PREFERRED

TO SEE PORTUGAL REPRESENTED AT ROME NPG BY AMBASSADOR DE FREITAS CRUZ WHOM THEY KNOW SLIGHTLY, RATHER THAN BY A PORTUGUESE ADMIRAL WHO IS AN UNKNOWN QUANTITY. BUT THOSE WITH WHOM I HAVE SPOKEN -- WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF LUNS HIMSELF -- SEEM PREPARED TO GO TO SOME LENGTHS TO AVOID ANY POLITICAL CONFRONTATION WITH PORTUGAL AT THIS TIME LEAST WE AND THEY TRIGGER FROM LISBON A WITHDRAWAL STATEMENT LIKE THE ONE FROM KARAMANLIS. THE ALLIES WISH TO DO NOTHING THAT COULD JEOPARDIZE AZORES BASE; THEY ASSUME THAT US DECISION WILL HINGE ON OUTCOME OF TALKS IN US WITH COSTA GOMES AND DOARES; AND THEY HOPE --PERHAPS WISHFULLY -- FOR ELECTIONS IN PORTUGAL EARLY IN 1975 THAT WILL CLARIFY SITUATION APPRECIABLY.

4. I HOPE THIS MIGHT BE OF SOME HELP TO YOU.

MCAULIFFE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 11 JUN 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 OCT 1974
Decapton Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decapton Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ATO05815
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741091/abbryyxz.tel
Line Count: 70
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: n/a
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: STATE 228686 AND PREVIOUS
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <28-Oct-2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GREEK-PORTUGUESE ATTENDANCE AT NPG MINISTERIAL MEETING
TAGS: NATO, PFOR, MNMC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005